

T H E

Faithful Souldier's Reward:

Or, a Glimpse of the

SAINTS HAPPINESS;

Discovered in two SERMONS,
occasioned by the Death of that
truly Vertuous and Religious
Gentlewoman, Mrs. *Katherine*
Disney.

The former Preached at *Kirkstead*,
the Place of her last abode here up-
on Earth, on the 18th Day of *May*,
1690, being the Lord's Day.

And the latter at *Swinderby*, near
Lincoln, where she was Interr'd the
Tuesday following.

By *William Scoffin*.

Rev. 21. 7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.*

Rev. 2. 10. — *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*

L O N D O N,

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2 TIM. 4. 7, 8.

I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing.

THE deceased Gentlewoman, and our honoured Friend, whose Death hath occasioned our present Meeting, did some Years ago make choice of this Scripture, to be preached upon at her Funeral; and therefore it was recommended to me by her most affectionate (and

A 2 now

now sorrowful) surviving Husband. And had I been left unto my own choice, I could not have pitched upon a more suitable Subject; considering the Temptations and Conflicts she had, more than many other Christians do ever meet with.

The Life of every sincere Christian is a continual Warfare, yet some are exercis'd with sharper Combates than many others ever are; amongst whom may be reckoned our deceased Friend; being one that was assaulted with many Temptations, yet through the Captain of her Salvation, she did conquer and overcome. So that well might she apply this Scripture to her self, and (in Humility) say with the Apostle St. Paul;

I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, &c.

In which Scripture, the holy Apostle asserteth these two Particulars.

1. *His Faithfulness in his Duty.*
2. *The Reward of his Faithfulness.*

The First for *Timothy's* Imitation;
the Second for his Encouragement.

I shall speak chiefly to the Latter of these; but will first consider the Context, and the Meaning of the Words; and then come to that Point of Doctrine, which I purpose to build my present Discourse upon.

In the three first Chapters of this Epistle, the Apostle directs *Timothy* to several Duties, and excites him to the faithful Discharge of the same; giving him also to understand what perillous Times there should come; and how that Troubles and Persecutions were to be expected; and hereupon he further exhorteth him to Constancy in his Duty, *chap. 3. 1, — 14.* Minding him also of his early Knowledg in the holy Scriptures, and shewing the Excellency and Profitableness of them, *ver. 15, — 17.*

And lest *Timothy* should be discouraged, and grow remiss in his Duty, from the Opposition and Persecutions he should meet with from Men ; the Apostle most earnestly chargeth him, as in the Presence of the All-seeing God, and as he will answer it to Christ at the great Day of Judgment, that he be faithful, serious and diligent, in the great Work and Duties of the Ministry, *chap. 4. 1, 2.*

And for the further pressing this Charge upon him, he lays before him the necessity of it, with respect to the Church's Welfare ; *For the time will come (saith he) when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lust shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears: And they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables, ver. 3, 4.* And seeing it shall be so, therefore preach the Word, be instant in Season, and out of Season ; *i. e.* Lay hold of all Opportunities for the bringing Persons to the Truth, and establishing them in it. *Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-Suffering and Doctrine ; q. d.* Suit thy self

self and Discourse to every one's Case and Condition; *reprove* such as are faulty, *rebuke* gross Sinners, and *exhort* all Men, with unwearied Long-suffering and sound Doctrine; bearing with their Peevishness, Stubbornness, &c.

And in *ver. 5.* he renews his Charge, or Exhortation, to *Timothy*; saying, *Watch thou in all things, &c.* *q. d.* Seeing there will be such a sad Defection, as I have shewed thee there shall certainly be; therefore be thou the more vigilant and watchful, both over thy Self and Flock; and endure Affliction and Hardness, as a good Souldier of Christ. *Do the Work of an Evangelist, Chap. 2. 3.* in gathering and confirming Churches: *make full proof of thy Ministry*; *i. e.* perform it thorowly in all the parts of it, so as fully to approve thy self to be a faithful Minister of Christ. And then he backs his Exhortation with a second Reason, and that is, the Nearness of his own Dissolution. *Ver. 6.* *For I am now ready to be offer'd, and the time of my Departure is at hand*; *q. d.* Within a while

Psal. 116.
15.

I shall suffer Martyrdom, and seal the Truths which I have preach'd, with my own Blood ; and shall thereby become an acceptable Sacrifice to God. Whether *Paul* came to know the Nearness of his Death, by the Carriage of *Nero* the Roman Emperor, under whom he suffered, or whether he had it by Revelation from God, is uncertain to us ; but certain it is, that he did know it : And thereupon, lays it before *Timothy* as an Argument to enforce his Exhortation upon him : *q. d.* ' Forasmuch, as within a while, the Church will be deprived of my Help, therefore it will need thy greater Care and Diligence : And as to thy self, while I am with thee, thou hast the help of my Instructions and Exhortations, and the Benefit of my Example : but seeing I shall shortly be taken from thee, therefore thou oughtest to give the more earnest Heed to what I now write unto thee. So much as to the Context.

And now I come to my Text ; wherein the Apostle doth further

excite, and encourage *Timothy* to his Duty.

1. By declaring unto him what his own Practice had been: *I have fought a good Fight, &c.* Shewing hereby, that there was no Duty, which he had been exhorting *Timothy* unto, but what he had constantly practis'd himself; and that with the greatest Diligence and Faithfulness.

2. By his shewing the Reward of his great Faithfulness and Diligence: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, &c. q. d.* Consider well what my Practice hath been; and that I have not fought in vain, run in vain, nor laboured in vain; but shall have an eternal and inconceivable Reward conferr'd upon me: And let the Consideration of this, encourage thee to the greater Faithfulness and Diligence in Duty.

The Apostle seems to allude unto the Grecian Games, when he speaks of his fighting, running, and his being crowned.

I have fought a good Fight; q. d.
My Life hath been a military Life,
even

even a continual Warfare; yet have I not fought the evil Fights of ambitious or quarrellous Men: but the Fight which I have fought, is the good Fight of Faith: I have stoutly opposed the Enemies of my Salvation, and through Christ (my Captain and Leader) have conquered and overcome.

The Life of a Christian is often in Scripture compared unto a Warfare, because of those spiritual Enemies which are continually Warring against us. There are three great Enemies, which every Christian has to grapple with. As,

1. The Devil, which is a very *subtil, watchful and powerful* Enemy, 2 Cor. 11. 3, 14. He hath many *Devices, Wiles and Stratagems*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. Ephes. 6. 11. He's a *malicious and enraged* Enemy, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Who rovethe about with unwearied Diligence, *seeking whom he may devour*. He hath his *fiery Darts* to molest those, whom he cannot entice by his ensnaring Wiles; Ephes. 6. 16. Yea, we have not only this great Adversary, the Prince of Devils, to grap-

grapple with, but whole Legions of Devils, even all the Powers of Darkness, *Ephes. 6. 12.*

2. Another Enemy of our Souls, is this evil World. There are two ways by which the World overcomes Multitudes.

(1.) By its Smiles and Allurements, *1 Job. 2. 16.*

(2.) By its Frowns and Threats, *Job. 15. 19, 20.*

Thousands are drawn from God, and eternally ruined, by the Smiles and Allurements of this evil World. Some are taken with Pleasures, some with Riches, and some with Honours: These are Satan's Baits, whereby he catcheth Multitudes, and keeps them in his Power, *Luke 14. 16, — 20. Mat. 4. 18, 19. 1 Tim. 6. 9, — 12. Mat. 19. 16, — 22.*

Again; Many who have in some measure escaped the World's Allurements, have been conquered and overcome by its Frowns and Threats, *Mat. 13. 20, 21. Job. 12. 42.* Yea, such an Enemy is this evil World, that none can overcome it, but such as are spiritual; they who are Believers

lievers indeed, and are born from above, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5.

3. Another Enemy that Christians have to grapple with, is Carnal-self, or our unmortified Corruptions : *I find a Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin,* (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 7. 21, 23.) Now the Flesh, or Carnal-self, is a very dangerous and deceitful Enemy ; *Jer.* 17. 9. *The Heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it ?* It's an old saying, (and in this respect a true one) that a Man has need of no worse an Enemy than he brings from home. For sure I am, there is no Man hath a more dangerous Enemy than Carnal-self. Our Enemies without could never hurt us, if it were not for this Enemy within. For, look as when an House is beset, then one Enemy within is much more dangerous than many without : So this home-bred and indwelling Enemy, Carnal-self, lets in the Devil and the World, to the spoiling and undoing of the poor
Souls

Soul. No wonder then, that the first Lesson which Christ teacheth his Disciples, is a Lesson of Self-denial, (*Mat. 16. 24.*) *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, &c.* Keep down Self, and we conquer all; but if Carnal-self get the upper-hand, the Devil and the World will easily overcome us. It is safe Advice therefore, which the Apostle gives, *1 Pet. 2. 11. I beseech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, (saith he) abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against the Soul.*

These are the dangerous Enemies that Christians have to grapple with; and none can overcome them, but through Faith in Christ Jesus.

Now some may ask, why this Fight of Faith is call'd a good Fight?

Unto which I answer, It may be so called upon several accounts; As,

1. Because they that are engag'd in this Warfare, do fight for a good Cause, the best that ever Souldiers fought for; they being God's Enemies as well as theirs, whom they fight against; and his Glory as well

as

as their own Salvation, is that which is contended for.

2. They have a good Captain, the best that ever Souldiers fought under ; for the Lord Jesus Christ is their Captain and Leader, *Heb. 2. 10.*

3. They are furnished with the best Armour and Weapons, that ever Souldiers made use of. The Christian Armour is Armour of proof ; and their Weapons are spiritual, and mighty through God, for the pulling down the strong Holds of Sin, *Ephes. 6. 10, — 17. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5.*

4. Their Wages are the best that ever Souldiers receiv'd ; *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son, Rev. 21. 7.* So chap. 2. 7, 10, 11, 17. chap. 3. 5, 12, 21.

There is good reason you see, why the Life of a Christian may be compared to a Warfare ; and why this spiritual Combate, or Fight of Faith, may be said to be a good Fight. Let us all then be perswaded to fight this good Fight of Faith. Never had Souldiers greater Encouragement

agement to fight, than we have under Christ's Banner; and never had Souldiers more need to fight than we; for we must either fight or die; fight couragiously, or perish eternally. And if we will resolve upon this, we must see that our Faith be true and saving; for such as want a true Faith, cannot possibly fight the Fight of Faith; therefore labour we for a lively Faith, and then live we in the lively Exercise of it.

Thus you see what is meant by the first Words in my Text, *I have fought a good Fight*. I proceed now to the next Words.

I have finished my Course; *q. d.* God appointed me a Race to run, both as a Christian, and also as an Apostle and Minister of Christ; the which Race I have now finished, and am come to the End and Period of my Days, *Act. 20. 22, — 24.*

The Life of a Christian is often (in Scripture) compared to a Race, as well as to a Warfare, *1 Cor. 9. 24, — 27. Heb. 12. 1.*

Well then, *let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easi-*

ly beset us, and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us. Let us press forward towards the Mark, as this great Apostle did, Phil. 3. 13, 14. He ran the Christian Race with an holy Activity and Vigour, till he got to the Goal, and won the Prize: Let us so run, that we may obtain.

Phil. 1. 21.

What a blessed Condition is that Person in, who can think of his Dissolution with Joy and Comfort, and can say with an holy Triumph, I have finished my Course? Such a Condition was this holy Apostle in, when he writ this Epistle to *Timothy*; he knew, *that to die was his gain: having fought a good Fight, and thro' Christ overcome: Having run the Race that was set before him, and kept the Faith unto the end: i. e.* adhered constantly in Judgment and Practice, to the Faith he professed, and preached to others; he could therefore say, with the fullest assurance,

Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, &c.

Heaven is express'd in Scripture by several Metaphorical Names; as sometimes it is called *Paradise*, 2 Cor. 12, 2, 4. Some-

Sometimes it is called an *House*, *Jeb.* 14. 2. sometimes it is called a *City*, *Heb.* 11. 16. sometimes it is called a *Kingdom*, *Luke* 12. 32. And sometimes it is called a *Crown*, as here in my Text.

“ For the Pleasantry of it, it is
“ called *Paradise* ; to note our A-
“ bode and Rest in it, it is called
“ an *House* ; for the Amplitude of
“ it, it is called a *City* ; and for the
“ Splendor of it, a *Kingdom*. And
to shew the exceeding Height of
Glory that Believers are advanced
to, it is called a *Crown*. Sometimes
a Crown of *Life*, *Jam.* 1. 12. some-
times a Crown of *Glory*, *1 Pet.* 5. 4.
And here in my Text, a Crown of
Righteousness.

Why is it called a Crown of Righteousness ?

Answ. It may be so called on several accounts.

1. Because it is the Purchase of Christ's Righteousness, *Ephes.* 1. 14. *Heb.* 9. 12. *Rom.* 5. 18.

2. Because it is given as a free Reward, to such as lead a righteous Life, *Rom.* 2. 7, 10. *chap.* 6. 23. *1/a.* 3. 10.

B

3. Be-

3. Because the Righteous God hath promised it, and therefore will bestow it; *Jam. 1. 12. Heb. 6. 10.*
 Now the whole Verse may be thus paraphras'd, [*Henceforth, or as to what remains, there is appointed, prepared, and in safe keeping for me, eternal Life and Happiness, an immortal Crown of Glory; which the Righteous God hath promised, and therefore will bestow it; a Crown which is the Purchase of Christ's Righteousness, and ample Reward of mine, though I have no ways merited or deserved it. Another kind of Crown is this, than what the Conquerors used to have in the Grecian Games, even a great and most excellent Reward; a Glory with which my whole Man shall be encompassed, as a Man's Head is with a Crown.*]

Mar. 16. 27.
 Rom. 2. 6,
 10.

Such a Crown of Righteousness will the Lord the righteous Judge give me at the Day of Judgment; (when all shall be rewarded according to their Works :) and not to me only shall this Crown be given as my particular Reward; but whosoever shall truly believe in Christ, and shall so lead their Lives in this World, as that they can desire,

desire, wait for, and be well pleased, with the Thoughts and Hopes of his coming to Judgment, unto them will he give the same Reward also.

Thus much shall suffice for Explanation.

I come now to the Doctrine. And that which I shall build my present Discourse upon, and which naturally ariseth from the Words of my Text, is as followeth.

Doct. *There is eternal Life and Happiness, an immortal Crown of Glory, yea, the highest Felicity that the Heart of Man can wish or desire, appointed, purchased, and prepared for every believing Soul, who overcomes in the spiritual Warfare, and continues faithful unto the Death.*

Jam. 1. 12. *Blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

*Rev. 21. 7. He that overcome
shall inherit all things, and I will be his
God, and he shall be my Son.*

*1 Cor. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor
Ear heard, neither have entred into
the Heart of Man, the things which
God hath prepared for them that love
him.*

*‘ The Eye may have seen much,
‘ and the Ear may have heard of
‘ more ; but the Heart may conceive
‘ of a far greater Happiness than ei-
‘ ther Eye hath seen, or Ear hath
‘ heard of ; yet all comes infinitely
‘ short of that Happiness, which God
‘ hath prepared for his faithful Peo-
‘ ple.*

*Mat. 13. 43. Then shall the Righte-
ous shine forth as the Sun, in the King-
dom of their Father.*

*Rev. 2. 10. Be thou faithful unto
Death, and I will give thee a Crown of
Life.*

Many more Scriptures might be
brought for the proof of the Point
laid down ; but these which I have
mentioned, are sufficient to evidence
the Truth thereof.

Now the Method which I shall observe in speaking to this Doctrine, will be to shew you, (so far as the Lord shall enable me)

1. *When Believers shall come to the Enjoyment of this Happiness.*
2. *Wherein it will chiefly consist.*
3. *Upon what account the Lord will confer it upon them. And,*
4. *Make Application.*

I. Then, *When shall Believers come to the Enjoyment of this Happiness?* I.

I answer, They shall enjoy it in part at their Death, but fully at the Resurrection. For,

1. At Death, the Souls of the Faithful do immediately pass into Heaven, and their Bodies lie asleep in their Graves, as in Beds of Rest. (Isa. 57. 2.) *They shall enter into Peace, they shall rest in their Beds.*

The Death of the Righteous is a sweet Sleep, out of which they shall be awaked; and their Graves in like manner, are Beds of Rest, out of which they shall rise again.

That the Bodies of the Saints do thus rest in their Graves till the general Resurrection, I know none that will deny ; but that their Souls (the mean while) are in the actual Enjoyment of Happiness with Christ, is denied by some : though I know not the least Grounds they have to deny it. And it has often been a wonder to me, (as it may be to any who considerately reads the Scriptures) that ever so plain a Truth as this is, should be so much as questioned by any. Yet some (professing the Christian Religion) do positively deny it ; affirming that the Soul doth sleep with the Body till the general Resurrection. But surely *St. Paul* would never have been in a Strait, (as he expressed himself to be, *Phil. 1. 23.*) if he were to be reduced upon his Dissolution into a Condition of stupid Sleep, without any Capacity of glorifying or enjoying God : *I am in a Strait betwixt two* (saith he) *having a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* " To be with Christ, is " to be in Heaven, for there Christ

See Dr.
Manton on
2 Cor. 5. v.
8. p. 67.

“ is at the Right-hand of God,
“ (Col. 3. 1.) Now the Apostle
“ speaketh not this in regard of his
“ Body, but in regard of his Soul ;
“ for his Body could not be with
“ Christ presently upon his Dissolu-
“ tion, till it was raised up at the
“ Last-day : but he knew that his
“ Soul should, and that it would be
“ in a far better State than the e-
“ state it enjoyed here.

“ *But is it not better* (you will say)
“ *to remain here, and serve God, than*
“ *to depart hence ?*

“ It were so, if the Soul was in a
“ State wherein we neither know,
“ nor love Christ ? Yea it would
“ certainly be far worse for *Paul*,
“ to have his Body rotting in the
“ Grave, and his Soul without all
“ Fruition of God, if this were true.
But he well knew, that if once his
Soul was separated from the Body,
he should enjoy a far greater Happi-
ness than he was capable of enjoying
whilst he was here.

Many more Scriptures might be
brought for the proof of this Truth ;
I shall name a few.

Luk. 16. 22. *And it came to pass, that the Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's Bosom.*
 " By the Bosom of *Abraham* is
 " meant Heaven, and Hell is oppo-
 " sed to it ; and 'tis explain'd, ver.
 " 25. *He is comforted, but thou art*
 " *tormented.* Heaven is a Place of
 Comfort, and Hell is a Place of Tor-
 ment : No sooner did *Lazarus* die,
 but he was carried by the Angels into
 Heaven ; No sooner did the rich
 Man die, but he was dragged by
 the Devils into Hell. (*Ver. 23, 24.*)
And in Hell he lift up his Eyes being in
Torment, and seeth Abraham afar off,
and Lazarus in his Bosom. " There-
 " fore I argue, not only from *La-*
 " *zarus* his being in *Abraham's Bo-*
 " *som*, but also from the rich Man's
 " being in Hell ; for God is not
 " more prone to punish, than he is
 " to reward. If the Wicked be in
 " Torment as soon as they die,
 " then the Saints are in their Hap-
 " piness presently upon their Dis-
 " solution.

Another Place is *Luke 16. 9.* *And I say unto you, make to your selves Friends*

Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations; i. e. Do good with your worldly Riches, and thereby evidence your Faith to be true, and so consequently make God your Friend; that when you come to die, he may receive you into Heaven, 1 Tim. 6. 17, — 19. Luk. 19. 8. Act. 10. 4. Mat. 25. 34, — 36.

When ye fail; “What is that time failing? It cannot be meant of “Condemnation in the Judgment, “for there is no escaping or reversing that Sentence; therefore ’tis “meant of the Hour of Death; then “are Believers received into everlasting Habitations, and their everlasting Habitation is in Heaven.

Another Argument which proveth this Truth, is that with which Christ silenc’d the Sadduces, Mat. 22. 31, 32. Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.

Living. "The Sadduces denied the
 "Immortality of the Soul, as well
 "as the Resurrection of the Body;
 "and Christ disproveth both by
 "this Argument: *I am the God of*
 "Abraham, *and the God of Isaac,*
 Exod. 3. 6. "and *the God of Jacob.* These words
 "were spoken by God unto *Moses*
 "long after the Decease of *Abra-*
 "ham, *Isaac* and *Jacob*; and it is
 "not said, *I was*, but *I am* the God of
 "Abraham, &c. Now saith Christ,
God is not the God of the Dead, but of
the Living: therefore *Abraham,*
Isaac and *Jacob* (though long ago
 deceased) are yet alive: So the
 Souls of all the Faithful departed out
 of this World, do live to God in
 Heaven, *Luke 20. 38.*

Another Scripture which clearly
 proves this Truth, is *Luke 23. 43.*
 The penitent Thief had desired
 Christ to remember him, when he
 came into his Kingdom: And Christ
 answered him again, and said, *Verily*
I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be
with me in Paradise. "Christ shew-
 "eth, that he would not defer his
 "Hope, but his Desire should be
 "accom-

“ accomplished that Day ; ’tis not
“ adjourned to many Days, Months
“ or Years, but to *Day*, saith Christ ;
“ *q. d.* Thou shalt immediately en-
“ joy thy Desire. Now what Christ
“ promised to him, he promised it
“ to him as a penitent Believer ; and
“ what belongeth to one Believer,
“ belongeth to all in a *like Case*.
“ Therefore if his Soul in the very
“ Day of his Death was translated
“ to Paradise, the Souls of other
“ Believers will be so in like manner.
Rev. 2. 7. *To him that overcometh,*
will I give to eat of the Tree of Life,
which is in the midst of the Paradise of
God. “ No doubt but by Paradise
“ is meant Heaven, and so the A-
“ postle explaineth it, 2 Cor. 12. 2, 4.
Thither the penitent Thief went
immediately after his Death, and so
doth every believing Soul.

Another Scripture that proves this
Truth, and the last that I shall name,
is 2 Cor. 5. 8. *We are confident, I say,*
and willing, rather to be absent from
the Body, and to be present with the
Lord.

This

This is so plain a Text for the proof of this Truth, that if we had no other Scripture to prove it by, even this alone were sufficient: For *we know* (saith the Apostle) *that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord,* ver. 6. But *are willing, rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord,* ver. 8. So that as soon as the Souls of the Faithful are separated from the Body, they are taken immediately into the Presence of the Lord; *in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore.*

Pla. 16. 11.

And thus I have sufficiently prov'd, that the Souls of the Faithful at Death, do immediately pass into Heaven, and their Bodies lie asleep in their Graves, as in Beds of Rest. Now,

2. At the general Resurrection, when Christ shall come to Judgment, the Bodies of the Saints shall be raised in Glory, and re-united unto their Souls, even these very self same Bodies which now we have. 1 Thess.

4. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead in Christ shall rise first. So Job. 5. 28, 29. Marvel not at this, (saith Christ) for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves, shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.

This will be a joyful Day to every believing Soul, but a Day of Terror and Amazement to the Wicked; When the Lord Jesus Christ shall be thus revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power: When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, 2 Thess. 1. 7, — 10.

The Thoughts of this most Blessed Day (which Job foresaw by Faith)

Faith) did much refresh his Soul, under his heavy Afflictions.

Job 19. 25, 26, 27. *I know (saith he) that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth: And though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, though my Reins be consumed within me.* Job was well assured, that the self-same Body which had suffered so much in the World, and which should rot in the Earth, and be eaten with Worms, should be raised again at the last Day.

Yet this we must know, that tho the same Body shall be raised again, yet a very great Change shall pass upon it. 1 Cor. 15. 42, — 44. *It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption; it is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory: it is sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power: It is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body.* So Phil. 3. 20, 21. *Our Conversation is in Heaven, (saith the Apostle there) from whence also we look*

look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body, according to the Working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

O blessed Change indeed! They shall be fashioned like unto his glorious Body! Now the Bodies of the Saints are *vile*, but *then* they shall be *glorious*. For Christ's Body now glorified in Heaven, is surely a glorious Body. Indeed * : And the Bodies of the Saints shall be like his.

* Rev. 1.

13, --- 16.

Mat. 17.

1, 2.

O how joyfully will the Soul reunite with the Body, when this glorious Change is passed upon it! And what a blessed Union will this be, nevermore to be broken! O then will the Saints be in a Capacity of enjoying the highest Felicity.

3. Their Bodies and Souls thus re-united, shall be received into Mansions of Bliss and Glory, where they shall for ever be with the Lord, and be perfectly happy to all Eternity, And O how should the Thoughts of this cheer our Hearts, and fortify us
under

under all our Trials. *Let not your Hearts be troubled, (saith Christ) ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a Place for you: And if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self, that where I am, there ye may be also. O comfortable Words indeed! Yea, and Christ has left them for our Comfort: Wherefore comfort one another with these Words, (saith the Apostle.) With what words? Why that Jesus Christ will come in the Clouds, and meet Believers in the Air, and they shall for ever be with the Lord.*

O blessed and glorious Day, when Christ shall pronounce that blessed Sentence to such as have been his faithful Followers! *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

The Members of Christ are now look'd upon by the World, as a Company of Hypocrites and vile Miscreants, even such as are unfit
to

to live in a Common-wealth ; but
Christ pronounceth them *Blessed*.
The World saith, *Away with such* Act. 22. 22.
Fellows from the Earth, for it is not fit
that they should live ; but Christ saith;
Come ye Blessed. Mat. 25. 34

“ And Christ calls them the Bles-
“ sed of his Father ; shewing there-
“ by the Original Cause and Foun-
“ tain of all our Happiness. The
“ beginning of our Salvation was
“ from an higher Cause than our
“ own Holiness ; yea, than Christ’s
“ Merit ; even from the free Grace
“ and Favour of God the Father.
“ He is the principal efficient Cause
“ of the Saints Blessedness. Christ
“ as Mediator, is but the way to the
“ Father, (*Joh. 14. 6.*) It is the
“ Father that appointed Christ, and
“ gave him to Sinners, (*Joh. 3. 16.*)
“ And in time brings them to close
“ with him, (*Joh. 6. 44.*) It is the
“ Father that prepared this King-
“ dom for them before the Founda-
“ tion of the World. They are
not less beloved and blessed by the
Father, than by the Son who re-
deemed them ; but whosoever is
C dear

dear unto the Son, is dear also unto the Father.

O what Soul-enraving Joys will the Saints be filled with, when Christ shall pronounce this blessed Sentence, *Come ye Blessed of my Father!*

“ To the Wicked he will say, *Depart*, but to the Saints, *Come*: as
 “ the Quintessence of all Misery lieth in the one, so the Consum-
 “ mation of all Blessedness lieth in the other.

We see here, what the Sentence will be at the Great Day; the reason of this Sentence followeth;

For, I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me; (Mat. 25. 35, 36.) These good Works are mentioned by Christ, and given as a Reason of the Sentence, (not as if Heaven was merited by them, but) as the undoubted Evidences and Fruits of a true and saving Faith.

And

And that a true Faith is implied in the Works here mentioned, is very clear and evident ;

1. From the Expression it self, *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat,* (saith Christ ;) 'twas Christ they respected in his *Members.*

Now it requireth Faith to see Christ in a *poor needy Person,* or *Prisoner* ; to love Christ in them above our worldly Goods ; and to part with our Wealth for their Relief, because they belong to Christ. This is a great Piece of Self-denial, and doubtless the Fruit of a saving Faith ; for 'tis not meerly the relieving the Poor, but the doing of it, as *in,* and *to Christ.*

2. Faith and good Works are very nearly linked together ; for Faith is not sound and saving, unless it produce these good Works ; and these Works are not acceptable, unless they proceed from Faith, and are done in Faith, (*Heb. 11. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5.*)

Where there is true Faith, there will also be good Works, as the genuine Effects and Fruits of it ; yet

certain it is, that the best of those Works do no ways deserve Heaven, (*Luk. 17. 10. Ephes. 2. 8, 9.*) And the Saints will be so far from pleading their Works, in a way of Desert or Merit, that they will rather altogether disown them ; being sensible of their many and great Imperfections, and how far short they came of their Duty.

Mat. 25. 37. *Then shall the Righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ; or thirsty, and gave*

Ver. 38. *thee Drink ? When saw we thee a Stranger, and took thee in ; or naked,*

Ver. 39. *and clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick, or in Prison, and came unto*

Ver. 40. *thee ? And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

By the way, we may observe these three or four Particulars ;

1. The wonderful Love and Humility of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King

King of Glory, in owning the poorest, and least of his Members for his Brethren: Joh. 20. 17.
Heb. 2. 11,
12.

— *In as much as ye have done it (saith he) unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* O wonderful condescending Love! that the great God should take such poor Worms as we, into so near a Relation unto himself.

2. Observe, that Christ takes that which is done to his Members, as done to himself: *I was an hungred (saith he) and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me: — For in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

So that we see, whatever Favours Mat. 10. 40,
41, 42. are shewed to Christ's poor Members, whatever Acts of Mercy and Charity are exercis'd towards them; Christ takes all as done to himself.

And on the other hand, whatsoever is done against the Members of Christ, whatsoever Unmercifulness, or Acts of Cruelty are exercis'd towards them, Christ takes it all as done against *himself*. When ever they are slighted and neglected, he looks upon *himself* as concerned therein.

Mat. 23. 42. *I was an hungred, (will he say) and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not.*

Ver. 45. — *For in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these my poor Members, ye did it not to me.*

So Act. 9. 4, 5. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (saith Christ); And Saul said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord answered him, and said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.

Why, the Lord Jesus was in Heaven, quite above Saul's reach; How then could Saul persecute him? It was in his Members. For Saul had been persecuting the poor Members of Christ,

Christ, and was now going to *Damascus* on the same Design; and Christ took all those Acts of Cruelty which were exercised towards his *Members*, as if they had been done to his *own Person*.

Thus also saith the Prophet to the People of the Lord, *Zech. 2. 8.* — *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of my Eye.*

This speaks Comfort to the Members of Christ, who are hated, and persecuted for Righteousness sake; but sore it speaks Terrour to their Enemies. For the Day is coming *Isa. 34. 8.* when the Lord will vindicate his own Cause, and will call all such to a Reckoning. And then they will assuredly find it hard, *to have kick'd against the Pricks, Act. 9. 5.*

3. We may further observe, how very acceptable unto the Lord the Works of *Mercy* and *Charity* are. These are the only Works which are mentioned in the Description of the Last Judgment.

The Lord takes delight in nothing more than he doth in shewing of *Mercy*; no wonder then, that Acts *Luk. 6. 35.*

of *Mercy* are so very acceptable unto him.

Jam. 1. 27. Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the World.

And on the other hand, as God is well pleased with Acts of *Mercy*; so he's greatly provok'd with *Unmercifulness*, and Acts of *Cruelty*. As he will say to the Righteous and Merciful, *Come, ye Blessed*; So he will say to the Wicked and Unmerciful, *Depart, ye Cursed*. He shall have Judgment without *Mercy*, that hath shewed no *Mercy*, *Jam. 2. 13.*

4. Observe the different Tempers of the Righteous and Wicked in Judgment. The Righteous who have done many good Works, will be asham'd to hear any of them mentioned by Christ, so sensible are they of their great Imperfections: *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? &c.* (will they say.) But the Wicked who have done little or no good at all, will be ready

to excuse and justify themselves; saying, *When saw we thee an hungred, Matth. 25. or a-thirst, or a stranger, or naked, 44. or sick, or in Prison, and did not minister unto thee?* But their vain Excuses will do them no good; *For these shall go into everlasting Punishment; Ver. 46. but the Righteous unto Life Eternal.*

And now I come to the Second Thing propounded; which is to shew you (as the Lord shall enable me) wherein the Happiness of Believers (in the other World) will chiefly consist.

II.

And I humbly conceive, it will chiefly consist in these two Particulars following.

1. *In a perfect freedom from all that is really Evil.*

2. *In the full enjoyment of all that is truly Good.*

There is no Tongue indeed can possibly express the greatness of the Saints

Saints Happiness. Yet so much may we conceive thereof, by seriously considering these two Particulars, as might fill our Souls with breathing Desires after the Enjoyment of it; and with admiration of God's wonderful Love, in providing such an Happiness for us.

Quest. What then are those Evils that Believers shall be freed from at Death?

Heb. 12. 23. *Why,* 1. They'l be freed from all
 1 Cor. 13. their Sins, Infirmities, Weaknesses,
 10. and Imperfections. And O what
 Eph. 5. 27. an Happiness will this be, to be perfectly freed from Sin! You that groan under the burden of Sin, can set your Seal to this Truth, that a perfect Freedom from all our Corruptions will make us happy indeed. *Chear up then, believing Saul,* whose Infirmities and Weaknesses are thy greatest Burden; for a time of Refreshment will shortly come. Yet a little while, and thou shalt sin no more, nor sorrow any more. Thou art now troubled for thy Unbelief, thy hardness of Heart, and deadness
 of

of Spirit; and that thy Affections are so flat and low, thy Corruptions so strong, and thy Failings so many; and that thou walk'st on so heavily in the Ways of God, and canst not do the good thou wouldst: but Death will knock off all these Fetters, and set thee free within a while.

O that I might never sin more against my good and gracious God! Rom. 7. 24.
(says a poor gracious Soul.) Why, I tell thee, poor Soul, (and take it for thy comfort) that it is but a little while, and thou shalt sin no more, nor sorrow any more, nor dishonour thy gracious God any more; which is now the chief cause of thy greatest Sorrow.

There is no Comfort ariseth from hence, to such as are in Love and in League with Sin: but to those whose Sin is their great Grief and Burden, it affordeth matter of very great Comfort.

2. Believers shall likewise be freed from all their Temptations and Enemies. Now they are troubled on every side, and molested with many Temptations; but Death (with-
in

2 Cor 7. 5.

in a while) will set them free. For if the time will come, when God's People here on Earth shall obtain Freedom from their Enemies in a very great measure, how much more when they come to Heaven ? (See *Isa.* 11. 9. and *chap.* 65. 17, — 25. *Rev.* 20. 1, 2, 3.) *Chear up, then Believing Soul, who art here surrounded with many Temptations ; for there is no Tempter in Heaven, either to entice thee to Sin, or to trouble and molest thee : there are no Snares there to entangle thee ; no Enemy there, that shall in any-wise hurt thee. No, no, thou'lt have none but Friends in Heaven, and the best of Friends,*

There Triumph over Sin is won,
The Devil and Death defac'd,
The Kingdom of the Just begun,
And there in Glory plac'd.
There Tyrants nothing have to do,
Nor Rack, nor Rope is known :
Tormentors all, and Satan too,
Are fully overthrow'n.

As one thus expresseth it in Metre.

3. Believers shall be perfectly freed from all their Sicknesſes, Pains and Sorrows. Rev. 7. 16, 17. *They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the miſt of the Throne, ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living Fountains of Water: and God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.* So chap. 14. 13. *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours.* And again, chap. 21. 4. *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: for the former things are paſſed away.*

O how ſweet is *Health*, after a long pining *Sickneſs*! How ſweet is *Eaſe*, after racking *Pains*! How ſweet is *Peace*, after great *Troubles*! And how ſweet is *Reſt*, after hard *Labours*! *Why*, in Heaven there will be perfect *Health*, and perfect *Eaſe*, and perfect *Peace*, and *Reſt*, and *Happineſs*, and that for evermore.

Chear

Chear up then, Believing Soul, who art here exercised with pining Sickness, or with racking Pains; whose Sufferings and Sorrows are many, and great: for yet a little while, and all Tears shall be wip'd from thine Eyes; and thou shalt be sick no more, nor in pain any more; but shalt shortly take an eternal Farewel of all thy Sufferings, Pains and Sorrows.

John 3.
16, 18.

4. Believers shall be freed from Hell, and from all Fears of Damnation. Joh. 5. 24. *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my Words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death unto Life.* So Rom. 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* O what would the Damned in Hell give, to purchase such a Freedom! *What shall it profit a Man (saith Christ) if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? Why, no doubt but the Damned in Hell*

Mar. 8. 36,

37.

Hell would give ten thousand Worlds (if they had them) to have their Souls freed from that State of Misery. But alas, it must not be, if they had Millions of Worlds to give for it. O dreadful will be the condition of those that must be eternally separated from God, and lie under his heavy Wrath for ever! *Who knows the Power of thy Wrath?* (saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 90. 11.) There is none can *express it*; no, nor any *conceive it*, but the Damned in Hell that lie under it. Do those then know what they do, who are running headlong to that State of Misery? And that cannot endure to be controul'd, or stop'd in their Course thither? O what Pains do many take to undo themselves! And what haste do they make to their own Perdition? As if they could not be in Hell too soon: or else do imagine it to be but a Fancy. How many are there in these our Days, that can dare the Great God to damn them? As if they would have the World to know, that they

they have Courage enough to be Damned. O dreadful! what do these Persons think? Their Damnation sure will come soon enough, without their so often calling for it. And O it will be very sad

Rev. 21.8. indeed, to lie in a *Lake of Fire and*

Mar. 9. 43. *Brimstone! where the Worm dieth not,*

—48. *and the Fire shall never be quenched!*

Mat. 13. And where will be nothing but bowl-

41, 42. *ing, and yelling, weeping, and wail-*

Isa. 65. 14. *ing, and gnashing of Teeth! No*

Heart can conceive what Horroir and Anguish will seize the Souls of the Damned in Hell, and even fill them with Rage, and everlasting Desparation. Oh! how will they roar, and tear themselves, both from the Sense of their Loss and Pain?

Surely, then to escape Hell deserves our uttermost Care and Diligence. No Labours should be thought too much, no Pains accounted too great, for the obtaining Freedom from such Miseries.

1 Thess. 1. O happy Souls most sure are they,

10. whom the Lord shall save from the

Chap. 5. 9. *Wrath to come.* Yea, these are the Persons

Persons that are happy indeed.
And who are they? Why, all that truly believe in Christ, and that overcome in the Spiritual Warfare.

Chear up then, Believing Soul, whom the Lord will free from Hell and Damnation, for thou art the Person that hast cause to be chearful. Now it Heb. 2. 14, may be, thou art full of Fears, lest 15. Hell should be thine eternal Portion; Joh. 6. 40. but Death (within a while) will put all out of doubt, and free thee from all thy Fears of Damnation.

John 10. 27, — 29. My Sheep hear my Voice, (saith Christ) and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any Man pluck them out of my Hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none can pluck them out of my Father's Hand. Well then, every believing Soul is safe, (though now it may be they have many Doubts) 1 Pet. 1. 5. for the Lord will make good his Promises to them, and will set them far above the reach of Danger.

5. At the general Resurrection, when Christ cometh to Judgment, the Bodies of the Faithful shall be freed from Corruption, and be raised again most Glorious Bodies. For
 1 Cor. 15. *this Corruptible must put on Incorrupti-*
 43, 53, 54. *on, and this Mortal must put on Im-*
 Phil. 3. 21. *mortality. And Christ shall change our*
vile Body, that it may be fashioned like
unto his Glorious Body. And then
 will it be fitted for the nearest Union, with a pure, immortal, and glorify'd Soul. And the Body and Soul thus reunited, will be capable of enjoying the highest Good.

Which is the next thing in order to be enquired into, under this Second General Head.

Quest. 2. *What then is that Good, or that Blessedness, which Believers shall enjoy in Heaven? Why,*

1. Their Graces shall there be perfected, and the Image of God restored in them. They have here but some small Resemblances thereof; but in Heaven they'll be thoroughly renewed to it. Their Holiness, Knowledge, and Love to God, will

will there be perfect and compleat. Their Graces (alas) are now but weak ; but then they shall be strong. Here they enjoy but a small Measure ; but there they shall enjoy a Fulness. They now greatly long, and breath after Holiness, and after the Knowledg and Love of God ; and there they shall have their Desires fulfilled.

Chear up then, Believing Soul, who dost now much bewail thy great Imperfections ; and art often (with Sighs and Groans) breathing forth such longing Desires as these ; O that I was more Holy, and more truly Gracious ! that I knew God better, and could love him more ! O that Phil. 5. 8,
I could attain to a State of Perfection ! How happy then should I be ? Why, the Time is drawing on apace, when thou shalt be Holy, as 1 Cor. 13. 9-12.
God is Holy ; and Know, as thou art 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3.
Known ; and Love, as thou art Beloved of Him.

O Blessed Condition indeed !
With what raised Affections will
the Faithful serve God, when once
D 2 they

they arrive to this State of Perfection? How will they contemplate his incomparable Excellencies? And how joyfully then will they sing forth his Praises? "They'l never
 "cease to love, and admire, and
 "therefore never cease to praise
 "their God. Their Hearts will
 "be there eternally enflamed, and
 "their Mouths eternally opened
 "to glorify him. But with the
 "highest Veneration they'l adore
 "his Goodness, and sing aloud of

Psal. 59. 16. "his Mercy. *I will sing of thy Power, O Lord, (saith David) yea, I will sing aloud of thy Mercy. And again, (saith he in another Place)*

Psal. 89. 1. *I will sing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever.* 'Tis certain that the glorify'd Saints in Heaven, will have such a Sense of God's Mercy and Love, as shall fill their Mouths

Ezek. 16. with Eternal Praises. O how
 6, 8. will they admire and adore that

Joh. 3. 16. Love, that pitied them in their lost
 chap. 6. 44. Estate, when no Eye pitied them!

Jcr. 31. 3. That Love that provided a Redeemer for them, and in time brought them to close with him!

That

That Love, that in such an admirable manner conducted them through the World, and ordered all things here below to their Spiritual and Eternal Advantage! Yea, and they'l always be under the Beams of his Love, which will be vigorously reflected in their joyful Praises. It will there be the highest Felicity, to contemplate his most excellent Perfections; their greatest Pleasure to love and please him; and their highest Honour to glorify him. "They'l there be employed in the noblest Work, and excited by the highest Motives.

I will speak of the glorious Honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous Works, (saith David, Psal. 145. 5.) And again, They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great Goodness, and shall sing of thy Righteousness, Ver. 7. Now if the Saints while here on Earth, do thus love, and praise, and adore the Lord; how much more when they come into Heaven? "Their affectionate Praises will there be renewed,

D 3

“ renewed, without any let or inter-
 “ mission, because the Divine Fa-
 “ vours are there renewed every
 “ Moment. O Blessed and Glori-
 “ ous Employment indeed ! Who
 would not strive to be thus em-
 ployed ?

Psal. 145.
 10, 11.

Ver. 13.

*All thy Works shall praise thee,
 O Lord ; and thy Saints shall bless
 thee. They shall speak of the Glory
 of thy Kingdom ; and talk of thy
 Power. Thy Kingdom is an everlast-
 ing Kingdom ; and thy Dominion en-
 dureth throughout all Generations.
 O help us to love and praise thee
 now, that we may be more fitted
 for Eternal Praises !*

2. The glorify'd Saints and An-
 gels will be a Believer's everlasting
 Companions. And what a blessed
 Society will this be, and how much
 will it add to our Happiness ? 'Tis
 comfortable to meet with the Saints
 of God now, though it be but in a
 Mourning-Duty : but most sure it is,
 their Communion there will be quite
 another thing. For then they'll be
 perfectly and eternally freed from
 all

all their Infirmities and Weaknesses. Now alas ! their many Infirmities do much hinder the pleasure of their Society : but most delightful then will their Company be. Here their Affections are flat and low, and they are often dull, and out of frame ; but in Heaven it will be otherwise. There we shall have the most raised Affections, and shall always be in a serious Frame. And this will indear us to one another, and will make our Communion most pleasing and delightful.

David esteemed the Saints of God the most excellent Persons upon Earth ; and declared, that in the Society of them, he took the greatest Delight. And this indeed is the true Character of a Heaven-born Citizen of Zion ; He is one that greatly loves (and delights in) the Company and Society of the Saints.

The Wicked desire not their Society, and shall therefore be eternally separated from it ; but the Faithful do greatly love and value it, and therefore shall eternally enjoy it.

Psal. 16. 3.
& 119. 63.
Psal. 15. 4.
1 Joh. 3. 14

3. The Faithful shall then see the Face, and enjoy the Presence of their Glorious Redeemer. Joh. 17.

24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the*

Phil. 1. 23. *World.* The Souls of the Faithful shall be with Christ, immediately after Death ; and both Body and Soul shall be with him, at the General Resurrection.

Joh. 14. 2, 3. *In my Father's House are many Mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you : I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self, that where I am, there ye may be also.*

Luk. 16.
22.

“ At Death, Christ sends his
“ Angels to conduct the Soul to
“ Heaven. But at the general Re-
“ surrection, he will come himself
“ in Person, and will fetch us thi-
“ ther in State ; which will make
“ our Access to Heaven the more
“ glo-

“ glorious. He will then come to
“ lead his Flock to their everlast-
“ ing Fold ; to present his Bride
“ unto God, decked and apparelled Eph. 5.27.
“ with Glory. And O what a
“ glorious Sight will it be, to see
“ Christ and his Followers with
“ Crowns on their Heads ! To see
“ their triumphant Entrance into
“ those everlasting Mansions ; and
“ the Angels welcoming them with
“ Shouts of Joy ! And then to see
“ Christ on his Throne of Glory,
“ and they themselves placed round
“ about him ; beholding him there
“ with open Face, in his greatest
“ Splendour and Dignity ! What
“ a Soul-enraving Sight will this
“ be ?

Happy are thy Men, and happy are 2 Chron.
these thy Servants, which stand conti- 9. 7.
nually before thee, and hear thy Wis-
dom, (said the Queen of Sheba to
King Solomon.) But O how much
more happy will they be, who
shall stand before Christ, and see
his Glory ! Why thus shall his
Faithful Servants do. Joh. 12. 26.
If any Man serve me, let him follow
me ;

me; and where I am, there shall also my Servant be: if any Man serve me, him will my Father honour. It will be an Honour, and Happiness indeed, to be ever in the Presence of their glorious Redeemer, and there to be glorified with him.

What Comfort and Encouragement doth this afford to the Faithful Souldiers of Christ?

To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. Rev. 3. 21.

O how should this animate and encourage us against the Spiritual Enemies of our Souls? If we now fight courageously under Christ's Banner, we shall one Day be crowned with Glory and Honour. And this assuredly will make amends for all that we can do, or suffer for him. *Moses* was well assured of it; and therefore esteemed Reproaches for Christ, above all the Treasures in Egypt: for he had respect ('tis said) unto the recompence of the Reward. He knew that to be for ever with Christ, to behold his Glory,

Heb. 11. 26

Glory, and to be glorify'd with him; to sit on his Throne, and to reign with him, would beyond comparison make amends, for all that he could do, or suffer for his sake. Rom.8.18.

“ Christ is now the Desire of
“ the Saints, and in Heaven he
“ will be their everlasting Delight.
“ O how will the glorify'd Saints
“ then rejoyce, in the view of the
“ surprizing Wonders of his Love !
“ From Everlasting he loved them;
“ and to Everlasting they'l love
“ him again. There will no Love
“ be lost betwixt Christ and his
“ Members, when once they get
“ to Heaven: for their Love to
“ him there, will be a correspon-
“ dent Affection, according to their
“ utmost Capacity. All those Af-
“ fections that were scattered here
“ below, will there be concentred
“ in him for ever. And most sure,
“ he infinitely deserves their Love ;
“ having ransomed them from the
“ worst of Miseries, and purcha-
“ sed an everlasting Inheritance
“ for them ; and all this with
“ the

“ the dearest Price of his own
 “ most Precious Blood.

O love the Lord, all ye his
 Saints, who hath loved you at so
 dear a rate ; and who will give you
 yet greater Discoveries of his Love,
 when he takes you into his glorious
 Presence,

4. The Faithful shall then enjoy
 the clearest Sense of God's Love un-
 to them ; and shall also have their
 Souls inflam'd with the most ardent
 Love to him. And O what Soul-
 ravishing Comforts will this afford
 unto them !

There is nothing which doth now
 more trouble the Saints, than the
 great coldness of their Love to God,
 and the want of a Sense of God's
 Love to them.

*Psal. 30. 5, 7. — In his Favour is
 Life : weeping may endure for a
 Night, but Joy cometh in the Mor-
 ning. Lord, by thy Favour thou hast
 made my Mountain to stand strong :
 but thou didst hide thy Face, and I
 was troubled. If God hides his Face*
 but

but never so little, and with-holds but the Sense of his Love from the Saints ; how are their Souls overwhelmed with Trouble ? But a Sense of his Favour, and the Light of his Countenance, doth soon fill the Soul with enravishing Comforts ; and make all Troubles vanish, and quite disappear. What unspeakable Joys and Comforts then will the Souls of the Saints be filled with when they come to enjoy the most feeling Sense of God's dearest Love unto them ?

Psal. 4. 6, 7.

5. They shall then enjoy God fully, and shall see him Face to Face ; and the Beatifical Vision will be unto them,

1. A Transforming } Vision, *Pf. 17. 15.*
2. A Soul-satisfying }

1. It will be unto the Saints a Transforming Vision. The sight which we have of the Lord in the Gospel, transformeth us in some measure, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* For we all with open Face, beholding as in a Glass

Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. If by looking upon the Lord through the Light of the Spirit, we are made like him in some measure; then surely in Glory, when we see him Face to Face, we shall be more like him. 1 John 3. 2. *We know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* The Apostle gives this as a Reason, why the Saints in Glory shall be like the Lord; *because they shall see him as he is.* To see the Lord as he is, will be a transforming Sight.

“ For look as in a Glass held up
 “ against the Sun, bath the Image
 “ and Brightness of the Sun re-
 “ flected upon it: So the more
 “ clearly we behold the Lord of
 “ Glory, the more of his Image
 “ shall we bear upon us. And O
 “ what a blessed thing will it be,
 “ for us poor Creatures to be made
 “ like unto the Lord!

“ Now this Likeness and Con-
 “ formity makes way for Love;
 “ and

“ and Love makes way for De-
“ light ; and Delight makes way
“ for Fruition : For the more we
“ love God, the more shall we
“ delight in him ; and the more
“ we delight in God, the more
“ will God delight in us ; and
“ will give us the actual Fruition
“ of himself, for our highest Feli-
“ city and Blessedness.

2. Therefore the Beatifical Vi-
sion will be unto the Saints (as a
transforming, so also) a Soul-satis-
fying Vision : For herein the Soul
will fully enjoy God. And then
will God be unto every Saint an
over-flowing Fountain of all Feli-
city. “ Here a Believer’s Joy and
“ Comfort admits of increase, and
“ decrease : but there the Soul
“ will be so filled with Joy, that it
“ can receive no more.

*Psalm 16. 11. In thy Presence is ful-
ness of Joy, and at thy right Hand
there are Pleasures for evermore.*

“ The Fruition of God’s imme-
“ diate Presence is not like the
“ Joys of the World, which can
“ neither

“neither fill nor satisfy a Man:
 “But in our seeing and enjoying
 “him, we shall have full content,
 “and compleat Felicity. The full-
 ness of Joy is suspended till then,
 that we may desire (and long for)
 that Day; and it will be a joyful
 Day indeed unto every Believing
 Soul.

*Ye now have Sorrow, (saith Christ)
 but your Heart shall rejoyce, and your
 Joy no Man taketh from you. John*
 16. 21.

Rom. 5. 2. Believers (while under deep
 Troubles here) *do rejoyce in hopes
 of the Glory of God: Yea; their
 Hearts are sometimes so filled with
 Joy, as that they can scarcely con-
 tain themselves. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Whom
 having not seen, ye love: in whom
 though now ye see him not, yet be-
 lieving, ye rejoyce with Joy unspeak-
 able, and full of Glory. Now if the
 hopes of this blessed and glorious
 Estate, breedeth such Joy, what
 will Fruition do? If a Glimpse or
 Taste be so sweet; what will the
 full Enjoyment be?*

Pfal. 17. 15. *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness.* This is that which will yield the fullest Satisfaction to the Soul; to see God, and to be like him, and to enjoy him to all Eternity. Oh the greatness, the exceeding greatness of the Saints Blessedness in Heaven! There is no Tongue can express it, no Heart can conceive it. And in this Blessedness they shall abide for ever. 1 Cor 2. 7.

Mat. 25. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment: but the Righteous into Life Eternal.*

As the Punishment of the Wicked, so the Happiness of the Saints, will endure for ever and ever. And the Thoughts of this, will greatly increase the Saints Joy, and the Damned Misery.

Eternity! Eternity!

*Thou mak'st hard Hearts to bleed;
The Thoughts of thee in Misery,
Will make Men wail indeed!*

The Day
of Doom,
Pag. 76.

For the Damned thus to think
with themselves, What, must I re-
E ver

ver have Ease again? Must I never obtain the least Freedom from these racking (Soul-tormenting) Pains? No, *never! never!* O most grievous, and insupportable Miseries! An *Eternal* Tooth-ach, an *Eternal* Head-ach, an *Eternal* pain of the Stone or Gout, or an *Eternal* Burning-Feaver, would be very sad and grievous. But what (alas!) are all these to the *Eternal* Torments of Hell?

When any of us are under some racking Pains of Body, then the Hopes of a Freedom from such Pains, gives some Ease and Refreshment.

But supposing a Person should have ground to fear, that he must endure some such racking Pains (without the least Ease or Intermission) for an hundred Years together, the Thoughts of this would even double his Misery. How then will the Thoughts of a miserable Eternity, torment and tear the Hearts of the Damned? This will make them roar out in the Bitterness of their Spirits, O
miser-

miserable ! miserable ! miserable ! Yea, it will exceedingly heighten their Miseries to think, that when thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands of Years are at an end, their Torments and Miseries will not be ended.

But now on the contrary : This is it, which will increase and compleat the Happiness of the Saints in Heaven ; to be fully assured that it shall never have an end : and without this they could never be happy.

As the fore-cited Poet has well expressed it.

Eternity ! Eternity !

Fig. 74.

*Oh, were it not for thee,
The Saints in Bliss and Happiness
Could never happy be !*

If there were the least ground to fear, that their Happiness would have an end ; the Thoughts of this, would put a damp upon their Comforts, and make them even miserable in the midst of their

Enjoyments. But so long as the Lord Jesus Christ lives, so long shall their Happiness last ; and that shall be for ever and ever.

John 14. 19. *Because I live, ye shall live also.* “ He tasted Death
“ for them, and swallowed it up
“ in Victory : and thereby obtain-
“ ed Eternal Redemption for them,
“ Heb. 9. 12. The Felicity above
“ is durable ; it is an abiding Hap-
“ piness. The Lord of Life will
“ uphold the Saints in that blessed
“ State for ever. *I am he that li-
veth, and was dead ; and behold I
am alive for evermore,* Rev. 1. 18.

Joh. 14. 19 *And because I live, ye shall live also.* Comfortable Words indeed !
“ The Happiness of the Saints
“ would be incompleat, if it were
“ not everlasting : Yea, the least
“ fear of losing it, would disturb
“ their peaceful Fruition. For as
“ hope in Misery allays Sorrow,
“ so fear in Happiness lessens Joy.
“ The Apprehension of losing
“ such an Happiness, would cause
“ Torment : but the full assurance
“ of its Perpetuity, will fill them
with

“ with unexpressible Joy: That which will terrify the Damned in Hell, will afford Joy and Comfort to the Saints in Bliss; and that is the Thoughts of *Eternity*. The Thoughts of this will transport the Saints, and will fill them with Songs of Joy and Triumph. O who would not strive, and labour, and pray, for a blessed and happy *Eternity*?

And now I come to the Third Particular; *which is to shew you up- on what account, this Happiness is conferr'd on Believers.* And

III.

1. Then, it is not conferred up- on them, on the account of any Worthiness of theirs; nor do they merit, or deserve such an Happi- ness either in whole or in part. No, though we should serve God a thousand Years, we could not me- rit to be one Day in Heaven. The Happiness is too great to be merited by Man, though the Works of the Saints were more perfect: For Finite Things carry no pro-

portion to an Infinite and Eternal Happiness. And besides, alas, the Works of the best are so many ways imperfect, that they may rather expect Punishment for them, than any (*the least*) Reward. Believers do fight the good Fight of Faith, but they do not merit Heaven thereby ; nor is an Immortal Crown of Glory conferred upon them on that account. *It is true*, God will reward their Faithfulness ; but their Faithfulness doth not deserve that Reward. The Heavenly Happiness most sure is such, as is not, nor can it be earned by the Saints. But,

2. It is partly the free Gift of God, and partly the Purchase of Christ. *As to any thing therefore that we have done, or can do, it is altogether free.*

1. It is freely given us of God, and by him was prepared for us. 'Twas his own Love and most Free Grace, that inwardly moved him to do this for us. Luke 12. 32. *Fear not, little Flock ; for 'tis your Fa-*

Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom. So 1 Cor. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him. And again, Mat. 25. 34. Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. This was the Preparation of God's Decree. He loved his People from the Foundation of the World, so as that he decreed to give his only Son for them; that by his precious Blood, and meritorious Death, he might purchase for them an Everlasting Inheritance. And in the Fulness of Time (*as he had decreed*) he sent his Beloved Son into the World; and most freely bound himself by his Covenant and Promise, to confer this Inheritance upon all true Believers.

Heb. 11. 15

Mat. 20. 23

Eph. 1. 3

--- 11.

1 Pet. 1.

18, 19, 20.

Gal. 4. 4, 7

Joh. 3. 15.

2. Christ by his precious Blood, hath purchased this Eternal Inheritance for us. Heb. 9. 12, 15. By his own Blood, he entered once into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal

1 Pet. 1. 19

Redemption for us. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of Death, for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the First Testament, they which are called, might receive the Promise of Eternal Inheritance. Christ having purchas'd it by his Death, and God the Father having graciously promis'd it ; therefore all they that are effectually called, shall have it conferred upon them. For Christ is ascended up into Heaven, to take Possession of it in our Name. I go (saith he) to prepare a Place for you, John 14. 2. By his Death he purchased for us a Right and Title to Heaven ; and by his Intercession he prosecuteth and applieth that Right. The merit of his Sacrifice pleads for Believers, that the Blessedness of Heaven may be conferred upon them.

Heb. 6. 20.

Heb 10. 14

Chap. 9. 24

&c 7. 25.

Now as Christ has purchased Heaven for the Saints, and the Father will freely bestow it upon them ; so he freely gives them his Holy Spirit, to fit and prepare them for

for the Enjoyment of it. And without this all the rest would be of none effect. For certainly 'twould not avail us any thing, to have Heaven prepared for us, unless we be also prepared for Heaven. An unrenewed, unholy Soul, would find little satisfaction in that Holy Place, supposing such might be admitted into it: *But there is no unclean Thing* Rev. 21.27. *shall enter there.*

“ The Divine Life is no way
“ suitable to the Nature of an Un-
“ regenerate Person. Alas! such
“ cannot love God here, nor do
“ him any acceptable Service; but
“ do loath that which he most loves,
“ and love that which he abhor-
“ reth. They are altogether un-
“ capable of that imperfect Com-
“ munion with him, which Rege-
“ rate Persons do here partake of.
“ How then can they live in that
“ perfect Love of him, Delight in
“ him, and Communion with him,
“ which is the Blessedness of Hea- 2 Cor. 6.14
“ ven?

It is the Holy Spirit must make
 Col. 1. 12. us *meet* to be Partakers of the Heav-
 enly Inheritance. *Except a Man be*
born from above, he cannot enter into
the Kingdom of Heaven, Joh. 3. 3, 5.

Joh. 6. 44. It is God (by his Spirit) that
 draws Sinners unto Christ, and
 powerfully worketh true Faith in
 their Souls; giving them thereby a

Joh. 1. 12, Title to Heaven: and then by re-
 13. newing and sanctifying their Na-
 tures, doth fit and prepare them for
 the enjoyment of it. It is certainly

therefore of God's Free Grace,
 that any of us are prepared for
 Heaven; as well as that Heaven is
 prepared for us. Ephes. 2. 8. *By*
Grace ye are saved, through Faith,
and that not of your selves; it is the
Gift of God. Faith (as well as Sal-
 Rom. 9. 23. *vation) is God's Free Gift. Belie-*
 vers are said to be *Vessels of Mercy,*
which God hath aforehand prepared
unto Glory. And again, *He that*
hath wrought us for the self-same Thing
is God; who also hath given to us
the earnest of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 5. 5.
 It is not therefore on the account
 of

of any thing that the Saints have done, or can do, that Heaven is prepared for them, or that they are prepared for Heaven; but all is of Free Grace. Tit. 3. 5, 6, 7. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs, according to the hope of Eternal Life.

Objection.

But doth not God command us to work out our own Salvation; and promise to reward us according to our Works? Phil. 2. 12. Mat. 16. 27. Rev. 22. 12. chap. 20. 12.

Answer.

Yes, he doth so: But yet these Scriptures do no ways imply, that the best of our Works are meritorious.

And

And as to the First, where we are commanded to work out our own Salvation; it presently follows, *that it's God which works in us, both to will and to do of his good Pleasure*, Phil. 2. 13.

We must indeed be diligent, and serious in the Work and Service of the Lord; and must yield sincere and constant Obedience to all his Holy Commands; striving to put forth that Power to the utmost, that he hath already given us; and must wait upon him in the use of means, that we may obtain more.

Heb. 5. 9. And without thus doing, we cannot be saved; neither *for* thus doing shall any be saved. There is a great difference, between our being rewarded *[according]* to our Works, and our being rewarded *[for]* our good Works. 'Tis true,

Joh. 3. 3. there are none can obtain Heaven
 Heb. 12. 14. without Regeneration and Holiness: And 'tis also as true, that none shall obtain it *upon the account* of their Holiness. Good Works are therefore necessary to Salvation, but

but they are not meritorious. No, if we could do all those Things which Luk.17.10. are commanded us, we must say, we are unprofitable Servants.

1. Because we shall have done no more, than *what was our Duty to do*, Luke 17. 10. We are many ways bound to obey God's Commands, though the Heavenly Happiness had never been promised. God has an absolute Right to all that we are, or have, or can do.

First, By Creation, and as he Prov.16.4. is the Supreme Sovereign of the World.

Secondly, By Preservation, or as Lev.22.31 he is our Maintainer, and Upholder; Act.17.24, on whose Goodness and Bounty 28. we daily live.

Thirdly, By Redemption, he having laid down a Price of inestimable value for us. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. 2Cor.5.14

Now on all these accounts, the best that we can do is absolutely due

due unto God. And a Servant that hath done no more than his Duty, yea, that cometh very far short of his Duty, can plead nothing of Merit.

2. Because the best of our Works can add nothing at all unto God. Psal. 16. 2. *Thou art my Lord (saith David) my Goodness extendeth not to thee.* So Job 22. 2. *Can a Man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? If thou be Righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine Hands?* Chap. 35. 7, 8. The more we abound in Works of Righteousness, the better it will be for our selves: But no Profit or Advantage will accrue unto God, by any thing that we can do. And therefore we can merit nothing at his Hands.

3. Because *It is God that works*
 Eph. 2. 10. *in us, both to will and to do of his*
 Luk. 19. 16, *good Pleasure.* Phil. 2. 13. *By the*
 18. *Grace of God we are what we are, as*
to any Good that is in us: and by
his

his Grace it is that we do what we 2 Cor. 3. 5:
do, as to any Good that is done by
us. 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I can do all* Heb. 13.
Things (saith the Apostle) *but how?* 20, 21.
why, through Christ which strengthneth
me, Phil. 4. 13. *Yea, and without*
me (saith Christ) *ye can do nothing,*
John 15. 5. *i. e.* Nothing in a way
of Fruitfulness: Yea, further, no-
thing that is truly good and accep-
table in the Sight of God.

Now can we do nothing that is truly Good, but what would have been our Duty to do, though no Reward had been promised? Can we do nothing that is any ways profitable or advantageous to God? Yea, Can we do nothing that he will accept of, but what we do by the help of his Grace? Then surely when we shall have done our best, we may say, we are unprofitable Servants. Nay, I may further add, that the best Works of the Saints are so full of Imperfections, that they rather need a Pardon, than deserve the least Reward.

It is not therefore upon the account of any good Works which the Saints have done, that the Heavenly Glory is conferred upon them ; but it is freely given unto them of God, Christ having by his Death obtained it for them.

Rom 6.23.
Heb. 9.12,
15.

We must therefore take heed (as we love our own Souls) of thinking to merit Heaven by our Works. It's a Popish Principle ; yea, and that indeed which all Men naturally are inclined to. And for certain it is a most dangerous Principle, and has been the undoing of many.

Rom. 9.30,
—33.
Chap. 10.
1, 2, 3.

A Saving Faith will produce good Works, as the genuine Effects and Fruits of it. Such Persons therefore as are destitute thereof, can have no ground to hope for Salvation. We must press after Holiness with all our Might, and endeavour to be Fruitful in every good Work : but yet we must beware, that we do not think of meriting Heaven thereby.

Jam. 2.26.
1 Joh. 3.3.
2 Cor. 7.1.

We may indeed assure our selves, *Rev. 22. 12*
and that upon good Grounds; that *1 Cor. 15.*
in doing well, we shall fare well: *58.*
for so hath God promised for our
Encouragement. *Isa. 3. 10, 11.* Say
ye to the Righteous, that it shall be
well with him: for they shall eat the
Fruit of their doing. But wo unto the
Wicked, it shall be ill with him: for
the Reward of his Hands shall be given
him. 'Tis not said of the Righte-
ous, that they shall have what they
have earned; but they shall eat the
Fruit of their doings; *i. e.* They
have done well, and they shall fare
well. But now as to the Wicked,
they shall have their due desert; the
Reward of his Hands shall be given
him. *Death is the just Wages of Sin: Rom. 6. 23.*
but Eternal Life is God's Free Gift,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now I come to apply the
Doctrine, and what hath been spo-
ken from it.

Use 1.

And the First Use may be for our Information, in these two or three Particulars.

As, 1. We may see how vastly different the State of Believers and Unbelievers will be, when they come to die. God deals with them now in a different manner, but then the Difference will be most apparent. See Isa. 65. 13, 14. *Behold, (saith the Lord) my Servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my Servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my Servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: Behold, my Servants shall sing for Joy of Heart, but ye shall cry for Sorrow of Heart, and shall howl for Vexation of Spirit.* Now if God deals thus differently with the Righteous and the Wicked, even here in this World, (as he oftentimes doth) how much more in the World to come? 'Tis true, the Wicked are often exempted from those Sufferings

ings which the Righteous do meet with in the World ; and hereupon (for want of a right Sense of Things) do conclude, that themselves are the happier Persons ; But Death will make them of another Mind ; and shew them the Folly of their Self-flattering Conceits : For then shall Believers immediately go to God, and Unbelievers shall go to the Devil ; the one pass into Eternal Glory, and the other into Misery and everlasting Punishment.

They have now (while they are here) very different Natures, and hereafter they shall have as different Rewards. The Righteous Man hath his worst things here, and his best he shall have hereafter. *Luk. 16. 25.* And the Wicked (on the contrary) hath his best Things here, and his worst he shall have hereafter. *Isa. 3. 10. 11.* The Conclusion will assuredly be dreadful to these, but exceeding comfortable to the Righteous ; for everlasting Misery will be the Portion of the one, and everlasting Happiness the Portion of the other. Eternity is affixed to both :

Mat. 25. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment: but the Righteous into Life Eternal.* The Happiness of the Saints will endure for ever, and so will the Miseries of the Damned; yea, when thousands and thousands of Years are at an end, they will both be as fresh as at the very first Moment.

O how great is that Happiness which the Damned will lose? and how great are those Miseries which the Saints will escape? How great are the Torments which the Damned shall endure? and how great are the Joys of which the Saints shall partake?

Perhaps now, Sirs, you see little difference between the State of Believers and of Unbelievers, but the Time will certainly (yea and shortly) come, when you shall see Things in another manner.

Now it may be, ye account the proud happy, and think there's little profit in serving the Lord: but then shall ye discern

discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Mal. 3. 14, — 18.

2. From what hath been said, we may see God's wonderful Love to Believers, in preparing for them such a glorious Inheritance, and so freely conferring it on them.

What a Miracle of Mercy and Loving-Kindness is this, (and even that which might fill us with Ad-^{1 Joh. 3. 1, 2.} miration) that the infinitely Blessed and Glorious God should take notice of such Wretches as we? O wonderful Love indeed! that such Rebels and Traitors (as we have been) should have admittance into his glorious Presence, and be made Companions of the Holy Angels! That such Clods of Earth, such despicable Worms, should be lifted up to the highest Heaven; that we^{Mar. 13. 43.} might shine as Stars there, yea, as the Sun in the Kingdom of our Father! And that this blessed State should be so freely provided, and

we taken into it on such gracious Terms. Admirable Love indeed! The Terms are Faith, and not Merit, which the Gracious God doth stand upon. That's the Tenor of the New Covenant, *Believe, and live*, not *do*, and *live*. Good Works are an Evidence of the Truth of our Faith, and of our Interest in that Blessedness; but they do not any way merit or deserve it, either in whole or in part. No, but it's *freely given* to those that *believe*. John 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting Life.* He hath it as sure as if he was in actual Possession of it. The Gracious God will exclude none but such as exclude themselves by their Unbelief. Yea, so merciful is he unto poor lost Sinners, that he sends his Ambassadors up and down the World, to offer Salvation unto them, and to pray and beseech them in the Name of Christ to accept thereof, on the most equitable Terms. Nothing doth the Lord require but this, that Sinners lay down their Rebellious Arms, and be reconciled unto him; that

2 Cor. 5. 20

that they accept of Christ for their Lord and Sovereign, and be true to his Cause and Interest for the future. O wonderful condescending Love! How should we admire it! Than the infinite Majesty of Heaven and Earth, should beseech vile Rebels to be reconciled to him! when as he is able to dash them in pieces, and even throw them into Hell with one Blast of his Mouth! Should we cry Day and Night unto God to be reconcil'd unto us, there would be nothing of wonder in it; but that the offended God should beseech Offenders to lay by their Enmity, and be at Peace with him; sure this is matter of Wonder and Astonishment! And yet how (alas) is his great Love abused, and his rich Offers slighted and disregarded by the most? As if the offered Salvation was merely fictitious, or the Heavenly Happiness were not worth the accepting? O base Ingratitude and astonishing Madness, to slight and neglect so great Salvation!

Job 4. 9.
Ps. 18. 13,
--- 15.
Mat. 10. 28

3. From what hath been said,
 Prov. 1. 22, we may see the great Folly of Men
 -33- in refusing such an Happiness. What
 is it but Happiness that all Men seek
 after? And for this they run, they
 labour and toil; and yet the most
 (alas, like the Dog in the Fable)
 while they catch at the Shadow, do
 lose the Substance. How eager are
 Men in pursuit of that which they
 imagine will make them happy? And
 what Cost and Pains will the most be
 at, for the obtaining a little of the
 World's Felicity? Whenas all world-
 ly Pleasures, Riches and Honours,
 cannot possibly satisfy the Mind of
 Man : As one has in Metre well ex-
 pressed it.

*All Earthly Things Man's cravings
 answer not,
 Whose little Heart would all the World
 contain,
 (If all the World should fall to one
 Man's Lot)
 And notwithstanding empty still remain.*

And

And supposing these Things could yield some Satisfaction, yet how soon must we take our eternal leave of them? Yet a little while, and all these Things will be unto us as if they had never been. But the Happiness above is substantial, and 'tis an abiding Happiness. What Folly and Madness is it then to prefer Toys and Trifles before such an Happiness? "What powerful Charm is it that obstructs our true judging of Things? What Spirit of Error hath possessed us? Can there possibly be a desire in Man of enjoying an Happiness beyond what is Eternal, yea, and Soul-satisfying and Infinite? O the wonderful Stupidity and Sottishness of Men, so careless of Everlasting Felicity! Eternal Things (alas) are quite out of sight, and therefore are they slighted by the unbelieving World. And they look upon those who live by Faith, as the veriest Fools imaginable; when they see them pressing on towards the Mark, for the Prize that is set before them, and exposing them-

Job 14. 1, 2

Psal. 49.

10, 11, 13.

Luk. 12.

16, 21.

Prov. 8.

18, 21.

1 Cor. 2.

12, 14.

Phil. 3. 14.

Heb. 10. themselves unto Sufferings for Christ,
 32.~34. and in hopes of the promised Glory.
 chap. 11.
 24.~26.

But we must become Fools in the
 1 Cor. 3. 18 World's esteem, if we will become wise
 to Salvation. And within a while
 shall the Wicked perceive whether
 Believers or themselves were the
 greater Fools.

As the Author of that Apocryphal
 Wisd. ch. 5 Book which is called the Wisdom of
 Solomon, hath well expressed it,
 saying,

" Then shall the Righteous Man
 " stand in great boldness before
 " the Face of such as have afflicted
 " him, and made no account of his
 " Labours. When they see it, they
 " shall be troubled with terrible
 " Fear, and shall be amazed at the
 " strangeness of his Salvation, so
 " far beyond all that they looked
 " for. And they repenting and
 " groaning for anguish of Spirit,
 " shall say within themselves, This
 " was he whom we had sometimes
 " in Derision, and a Proverb of
 " Reproach. WE FOOLS account-
 " red

“ted his Life Madness, and his
“End to be without Honour. But
“how is he numbred among the
“Children of God, and his Lot is
“among the Saints? Therefore
“have we erred from the way of
“Truth; and the Light of Righte-
“ousness hath not shined unto us,
“and the Sun of Righteousness
“rose not upon us. We wearied Jer. 9. 5.
“our selves in the way of Wicked-
“ness and Destruction; but as for
“the way of the Lord, we have
“not known it. What hath
“Pride profited us? Or what 1 Joh. 2. 17
“good hath Riches with our vaunt-
“ing brought us? All those Things
“are passed away like a Shadow,
“and as a Post that hasteth by.

“ — But the Righteous live for
“evermore, their Reward also is
“with the Lord: — Therefore Jam. 1. 12.
“shall they receive a Glorious King-
“dom, and a beautiful Crown
“from the Lord's Hand.

Use II. For Excitation.

A Second Use may be for the stirring us up to use our utmost Care and Diligence, for the getting and exercising a lively Faith, in order to our obtaining the Heavenly Blessedness. And,

1. Let me turn my Discourse unto those that are yet in a State of Impenitency. Sure what hath been spoken, should excite all such to lay hold on the Hope that is set before them; and to strive and labour with all their Might, to make sure of an Interest in Jesus Christ: for without this we must never hope to partake of Eternal Blessedness. *He that believeth not, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him, Joh. 3. 36.* O what should we strive and labour for, if not for Eternal Happiness? And what should we strive to escape, and flee from, if not from the Wrath to come? Why, Faith and Repentance are absolutely necessary, both for obtain-

Mat. 3. 7.

obtaining the one and escaping the other. *He that believeth not, shall be damned* (saith Christ.) *And except ye repent, ye shall all perish.* Well, what is it then that you are now resolved for? And what are the chief Desires of your Souls? Are you for Everlasting Glory, or for the Pleasures of Sin for a Season?

Are you for accepting of Christ for your Sovereign; or for continuing still to be the Servants of Sin? Are you for fighting the good Fight of Faith; or for being the captivated Slaves of the Devil? What is it you resolve upon? for one of these must be your Choice. Are your Desires after God and Heaven? Or can that be your Blessedness which you do not desire? Deceive not your selves (I beseech you) with vain Conceits, but consider these Things, and shew your selves Men. Do you think that God will ever receive any such into his blessed and glorious Presence as are not at all desirous of it, or unto whom it shall be a Burden? No, no, God sets not so small a value upon it,
as

Mar. 16. 16

Luk. 13.

35-5.

Joh. 8. 34.

2 Tim. 2.

26.

2 Pet. 2. 19

as to force it upon those that desire it not.

Psa. 17. 15. " Mistake not then the Notion of
 See Mr. " Heaven, or the Nature of a Soul-
How's Blef- " satisfying Blessedness. Do not
 sedness of " you render it unto your selves a
 the Right- " Composition of Sensual Enjoy-
 reous. " ments; but look upon it, as
 Psa. 63. " chiefly consisting in perfect Holi-
 15-8. " ness and Communion with God.
 Plal. 73. " And then you cannot judge of
 24-28. " your own Right to it, by a surer
 " Rule than this, that the Blessed-
 " ness of Heaven shall be certainly
 " theirs, whose Hearts are bent
 " and directed towards it. *Mat. 5.*
 " 6, 8. *Heb. 12. 14. Phil. 3. 8, 14.*

Repent therefore, and believe the
 Gospel, and sleep not in the Bonds
 Isa. 55. 1, 2. of Iniquity. You are earnestly
 Joh. 3. 16. call'd and invited to come and ac-
 Ez. 33. 11. cept of Eternal Happiness; and the
 Lord is pleas'd to expostulate with
 you, saying, Sinners, *Why will ye
 die?*

Consider how dreadful your Condition will be, if Death should find you in your Unbelief. It had been Joh. 3. 19. better for you never to have heard of a Saviour, than to live and die without an Interest in him. O! what will you have to say for your selves, when Christ as your Judge shall plead the Case with you? And say, Sinners, I sentence Prov. 1. you to Hell and Damnation; for 24.~31. this is the fruit of your own foolish Choice: No invitations, Perswasions or Warnings could keep you from running into it. I offered unto you Eternal Happiness, but you did not regard either Me, or my Offers. " You could love Job 21. 14, " the most vain and foolish Tri- 15. " fles, but you loved not Me, nor " cared for my Presence. You Psal. 10. 4. " had Thoughts enough and to spare for vain Things, but how " seldom did you think of Me, be- " cause your Hearts were not with " Me, I banish you therefore that " Presence which you never loved; " I deny you that Vision which " you

- Joh. 3. " you did always shun, and the
 19, 20. " Impressions of my Likeness which
 " you did ever hate. I eternally
 " abandon you to the grossest
 " Darkness, seeing Darkness was
 Luk. 13. " so grateful to you. Depart from
 27, 28. Me, and from the Happiness you
 slighted, into endless and easeless
 Miseries and Torments.

O ! what will impenitent Sinners have to say when the Righteous Judge shall plead the Case with them, and shall pass the irrevocable Sentence upon them ? All Mouths (assuredly) will then be stopped, and their Conscience will tell them that the Sentence is just.

- Heb. 3. 15, Think of this therefore, and con-
 sider it seriously, while a Door of
 Hope is yet open unto you. And
 if the Heavenly Happiness will not
 2Cor. 5. 11. invite you, let the Terrours of Hell
 affright you from your Sins. For
 it's certain, if you slight the Glory
 that's offered, you will bring up-
 on your selves Everlasting Con-
 fusion.

Flee therefore unto Christ as your Josh. 20.
only Refuge, that he may deliver you with Heb.
from avenging Justice, and from the 6. 12.
wrathful Displeasure of a provoked God.
Psal. 2. 12.

And O! let him not still have
fresh cause to complain, *Ye will not* Joh. 5. 40.
come to me, that ye might have Life.

2. It should also excite Believers
to greater Diligence in the Service
of God. *For so an entrance shall be* 2 Pet. 1.
ministred unto us, into the everlasting 5. 11.
Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.
If the Hopes and Fore-thoughts of
the Happiness above, will not ex-
cite and quicken us to our Duty,
what will?

Let us then be convinced that
there is such an Happiness; and
when we believe, let us look for it,
and long for it, and live in the
hopeful expectation of it.

Looking for that Blessed Hope, and
the Glorious Appearing of the Great
G God,

God, Tit. 2. 13, 14. Now this
 1 Pet. 1. 13 Hope should put us upon serious
 Diligence, and earnest Pursuit after
 such a Blessedness. Let us therefore
 Phil. 3. 20. endeavour to live Heavenly Lives,
 as we hope to partake of the Hea-
 venly Blessedness. "There is no-
 "thing should Influence our Hearts
 "below, but that which doth suit
 1 Joh. 3. 2. "Christ's Heart above. All must be
 "like the Lord, that are to live
 "with him. And if we do hope to
 Ver. 3. Be like him hereafter, then sure
 we should strive to resemble him
 here. Yea, *And every Man* (saith
 the Apostle) *that hath this Hope in*
him, purifieth himself, even as he is
pure, i. e. as Christ is pure. Yea,
 certain it is, if we do not desire
 further degrees of Holiness, we
 cannot be said to desire Heaven;
 for Heaven is the perfection of Ho-
 liness. A lively Hope therefore of
 our Conformity to Christ, in Glory
 and Blessedness hereafter, will assu-
 redly put us upon a vigorous pursuit
 of Conformity to him in Holiness
 here. O! were but our Hopes more
 strong and lively, they would give

us a Taste of the Blessedness above; and this Taste would set us upon earnest longing after the Enjoyment of it.

Rom. 5. 2.
Chap. 8. 19,
23.

2 Cor. 5. 2. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven.

So ver. 8. We are willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.

Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him, ver. 9.

Let us labour then, by a lively Faith, to realize the Happiness of Heaven to our Souls; as also to get a well-grounded Hope of our Interest in this Happiness: That is our most frequent and serious Thoughts, and delightful Meditations may be of it. For 'tis impossible a Man can hope for any Thing, but he will be thinking of it. And the more we think of the Happiness Above, the more we

Heb. 11. 1.

shall long for it. And where there are longing Desires and Breathings after the Enjoyment of such an Happiness, there will also be a heedful and cautelous Fear, lest we should miscarry, or fall short of it; and this accompanied with a diligent Care and most earnest Endeavour to make sure.

Well then, Let us make it appear, that our Faith is true, and our Hopes lively, by a more Holy Activity, Vigour, and Diligence in the Ways and Service of God.

Phil. 3. 10,--14. Ver. 17, 20. Mar. 11. 12. Rom. 8. 25. Heb. 10. 32,--36. 1 Tim. 6. 12. And let us wait with Patience for the expected Happiness, against all Oppositions and Discouragements; *For in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.* Gal. 6. 9.

I shall conclude this Use, with the Apostle's Exhortation, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Therefore, my Beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Now,

Use III. For Consolation.

The Last Use may be for Consolation to Believers, against Wants, Troubles, and Death it self. And,

1. It administers Comfort to Believers against all their Wants and Necessities. It may be now you are very poor, but there's durable Riches provided for you; even a full, incorruptible and glorious Inheritance. Let the Fore-Thoughts of this support and comfort you under all your Straits and Necessities, for your best Days are yet to come. Consider, It is but a very little while that we shall have need of these outward Enjoyments: And while we do need them, we have good ground to hope for such a measure thereof as is convenient for us.

Prov. 8.

18, 21.

1 Pet. 1.4.

Luk. 16. 25.

Psal. 34.

9, 10.

Psal. 8. 11.

Whosoever he be that doth seek God's Kingdom and Righteousness above all other Things, and that waits upon God in a diligent use

Mar. 6.

31, - 33.

of those Means that he hath appointed, shall certainly enjoy so much of these Things as the All-wise God sees requisite for him. And what can we desire more ?

Rom. 8. 32.

How soon (alas !) should we ruine our selves, if God should leave us to be our own Carvers ; or should give us whatsoever we desire in the World ? But it's well for us that we are under the care of so Wise and Gracious a Father, who will give us nothing but what's really good for us ; nor deny us any thing here in the World, but that which he sees would be hurtful to us.

Deut. 32.

15.

Psal. 37. 3.

7-9.

Ver. 16.

Rom. 8. 28.

We are often desirous of several Things which are good in themselves, and good for some Persons, and which we apprehend may be good for us also ; and yet God doth (in Mercy) deny us such Things as knowing them not for our good. And shall we not trust his infinite Wisdom before our own shallow and dark Understandings ? Yes surely.

Pro. 3. 5, 6.

We need not therefore to trouble our selves with distracting Thoughts, and with carking Cares, who have such a wise Father to care for us here, and provides so well for us hereafter. We have not yet received our Portion, but it is laid up, and in safe keeping for us; and within a while we shall come to enjoy it. *Fear not little Flock* (saith Christ) *it is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* Luke 12. 32.

Sure you that are adopted the Children of God, and have thereby a Right to the Heavenly Inheritance, may well be content with your Condition in this World; you being so much better provided for in the World to come. What if your Earthly Estate be sequestred, or any ways taken from you, so long as you have a better Estate in Heaven that none can deprive you of, even Eternal Mansions of Bliss and Glory?

1 Joh. 2. Let the Foresight (by Faith) of
 15, 16, 17. this Glorious Estate wean you from
 all inordinate Affections to Humane
 and Earthly Things. What are all
 the Pleasures, and Riches, and Ho-
 nours in the World, in comparison
 of those that are Spiritual and
 Heavenly? These will not satisfy
 but increase our Desires, but those
 will afford us the fullest Satisfac-
 tion. These are Temporal, and but
 for a Moment; but those are E-
 ternal, and shall last us for ever.
 The greatest Things that are here
 upon the Earth, will appear to be
 (what they are indeed) but very
 small and trivial Things, to those
 that can look beyond them with an
 Eye of Faith, and take a view of
 the Heavenly Blessedness.

“ What is Earthly Majesty, and
 “ all Earthly Glories (if put toge-
 Joh. 17. 24 “ ther) to the beholding the Lord
 “ Jesus Christ in all his Majesty
 “ and Glory? What are costly
 “ Garments, and the most rich
 “ Attire, to those Robes of Righ-
 “ teousness,

“teousness, and Garments of Sal- Iſa. 61.10.
“vation, wherewith the Saints shall Rev. 19.7,8
“be clothed in the great Day of
“the Marriage of the Lamb ?
“What are the most stately Pa-
“laces here on Earth, compared
“with Heaven the Palace of God, Joh. 14.2.
“and the Mansions of Blessed Spi-
“rits ? And what are all the Plea-
“sures in the World, to those Ri- Pſal. 36.8.
“vers of Pleasures which are at & 16. 11.
“God’s Right Hand ? Or all the
“Riches and Inheritances in the Col. 1. 12.
“World, to that Glorious Inhe-
“ritance of the Saints in Light ?

Whatsoever we want (as to outward Enjoyments) we may comfort our selves in the Hopes of Heaven ; where all our Wants will be abundantly supplied with Spiritual, Celestial, and much better Enjoyments.

2. It administers Comfort to Believers, against all their Afflictions and Troubles. It may be now you lie groaning under Bodily Weaknesses, as pining Sickness, or racking

racking Pains; rousing your self to and fro on your Bed, as a Door rouleth upon its Hinges; getting but very little Rest or Refreshment, through the anguish of your Pains, and the weariness of your Flesh,

But in Heaven there will assuredly be perfect Ease, and perfect Health, and Rest, and Refreshment, and that for evermore.

“ We are very apprehensive of
 “ present Pain, and present Grievances, but not of the Ease, Refreshment and Glory that shall succeed. But remember, and consider well with your selves, that
 “ though the Pains be sharp, the
 “ Sickness lingering, and hangeth
 “ long upon you, yet present Time
 “ is quickly past, but Eternity will
 “ have no end. For which cause

2 Cor. 4. 16, *we faint not, (saith the Apostle)*
 17, 18.

but though our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed Day by Day. For our light Afflictions which are but for a Moment, work for

for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. While we look not at the Things which are seen, but at Things which are not seen: for the things which are seen, are Temporal; but the Things which are not seen, are Eternal.

“ We pitch too much (alas!)
“ upon a carnal Hope, but do not
“ enough look after the Glory of
“ the everlasting State: and this
“ makes our Afflictions seem heavy
“ and grievous. Whereas, a well-
“ grounded and lively Hope of the
“ Heavenly Happiness and Glory,
“ would make our greatest Afflictions
“ on to become light, and turn our
“ Pains into Pleasure, yea, and
“ Death it self into Life.

But now let me apply it to those especially that suffer for Righteousness Sake.

Shall any of us shrink at Suffer- Rom. 8.17;
ings for Christ, who shall be in
Glory with him for ever? How
short is the Suffering? how long
the

the Reward? How light the Affliction? how weighty the Glory?

If we had but Wisdom to reckon aright, and would weigh these Things in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, we should quickly see whether present Sufferings, or the future Glory would turn the Scales. Rom. 8. 18. *For I reckon that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us.*

There are few that have met with greater Sufferings than this
 2 Cor. 11. great Apostle was exercised with,
 23, - 33. and yet he looks upon them as next to nothing, when compared with the future Glory. *I reckon* (saith he.) And most surely he had learned to reckon aright, and this much refresh'd him under all his Trials. So 'tis said of the believing Hebrews also, that they took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, as knowing in themselves, that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring Substance.

Heb. 10. 32,
 - 36.

And

And Moses esteemed Reproaches for Heb. 11.
Christ, greater Riches than the 25, 26, 27.
Treasures in Egypt: for he had re-
spect ('tis said) to the recompence of
the Reward. He did not only bear
his Sufferings with Patience, but
did also esteem very highly of
them, as knowing that Heaven
would make amends for all.

This is it that cheers the Hearts
of God's Faithful People, in all
their Troubles. *I had fainted,* (saith Psal. 27. 13.
David) *unless I had believed to see*
the Goodness of the Lord in the Land
of the Living.

Having Hopes of enjoying so
great a Good, beyond all Time, to 2Cor. 4. 37.
Eternity; we may well endure a far
lesser Evil, when so short, even but
for a Moment.

If we be reproached for the Name 1 Pet. 4. 12,
of Christ, we have reason to rejoice, -- 19.
and not to be ashamed: For on our Chap. 3.
Enemies part God is evil spoken of, 14, 17. &
but on our part he is glorified. And 2. 20, 25.
if

if we glorify God here, by our patient continuance in well-doing, he will also glorify us hereafter with Christ, in Eternal Glory. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him ; but if we deny him, he will also deny us.* 2 Tim. 2. 12.

Have any of us lost the love of Men, for our Sincerity and Faithfulness ? Why what is this to the Love of God, which we shall enjoy for ever ? Are we (by our Enemies) cast into Prison ? We shall shortly be in our Father's House, where there are Mansions of Bliss and Glory.

The worst that our Enemies can do us here, is only to kill the Body, and this they cannot do neither without the permission of God ; and when God permits them to injure our Bodies, he thereby designs us good to our Souls. So that our Enemies are very unskillful, whatsoever Evil they design unto us ; for when they impart the outward Man, they thereby better the inward

Ward Man : And if they root us 2 Cor. 4. 16
out of the Earth, they do but send
us the sooner to Heaven.

Yea, and the greater our Suffer- Mat. 5. 10,
ings are here in the World, the 11, 12.
greater will be our Happiness here-
after. 'Twas a Saying of one of
the Antient Fathers, when vilified
by his Enemies.

*He that willingly takes from my
good Name, unwillingly adds to my
Reward.*

Surely then, the Hopes of Heaven
should cheer our Hearts under all
our Trials.

3. It administers Comfort to Be-
lievers, even against Death it self.
These Earthly Tabernacles must be dis- 2 Cor. 5. 1.
solved, but what then? We have a
Building of God, an House not made
with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens.
We shall but leave a poor totter-
ing Cottage, to live in a Princely
Palace; and forsake an unquiet
and troublesome World, for a place
of

Isa. 57. 2. of everlasting Repose. Death to
 Rev. 14. 13. Believers is but a sweet Sleep, and
 1 Thess. 4. the Grave but a Chamber of Rest;
 13, 14, 15. where the Body doth quietly repose
 it self till the general Resurrection:
 And then it shall certainly awake
 from its Sleep, and be raised again
 a most Glorious Body, Phil. 3. 21.
 And while the Body doth thus
 quietly rest in the Grave, the Soul
 is in actual Joy and Felicity. It
 doth not sleep in the Grave with
 2 Cor. 5. 8. the Body, (as some do foolishly
 Phil. 1. 23. imagine) but is present with the
 Lord, and in a State of Activity.
 Death is to the Soul of every Be-
 liever an immediate Passage into
 Glory. Believers may therefore look
 Death in the Face with a great deal
 of Joy and Comfort, for its Sting
 1 Cor. 15. is taken away by Christ, and it is
 55, 56, 57. unto them a Translation. Their
 Life is not taken away, but changed;
 'tis changed from a miserable and
 corruptible Life, to that which is
 Blessed and Eternal. There's a Glo-
 rious State provided for Believers in
 the World to come, and Death is
 the ready Passage into it.

Where-

Wherefore comfort one another with these Words, (saith the Apostle.) 1 Thess. 4. 18.
With what Words? Why, that Jesus Christ shall come in the Clouds, and take Believers unto himself; and so shall we for ever be with the Lord. Ver. 16, 17.

Lastly, The Doctrine affords matter of Comfort, to the Dear Relations of our Deceased Friend; who hath fought a good Fight, and hath finished her Course, and is now gone to receive the Crown which the Lord hath prepared for her.

She was one that was assaulted with many Temptations, but through the Captain of her Salvation she did conquer and overcome; and is now enjoying (as we have ground to hope) the Reward of a Faithful Souldier of Christ; even an immortal Crown of Life and Glory; yea, the highest Felicity she is capable of receiving, till her Body and Soul be again reunited; and then will her Happiness be full and complete. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 2. 10.

Ever since I knew her, I look'd upon her to be one that desired to make Religion her Business, or the chief concern of her Life.

She had very low and mean Thoughts of her self; and was greatly afraid of being mistaken, and of thinking her Condition to be better than it was. She has oft (in my hearing) lamented and bewail'd her Distractions of Mind in Duty; and would tell me she found it a very difficult thing to keep her Heart close unto God. And where is there a Christian indeed, that doth not experience this?

It was her practice every Day to read a considerable Portion of the Holy Scriptures, and to meditate and pray in secret; besides her constant joyning in Family-Duties. She would say that she found those two Soul-enriching Duties of Meditation, and Self-examination, very hard and difficult to perform them aright.

She

She had a very hearty Love (I be- 1 Joh. 3. 14
lieve) to all God's Faithful People ;
not only those that were of the same
Judgment with her, but also to
those that differed from her in some
Circumstantials of Religion.

She was far from that factious
and narrow Spirit (which too many
have discovered in these our Days)
that has no hearty Love for any
but those that are of their own
Persuasion. No, wheresoever she
saw any thing of the Image of God, Psal. 15. 4;
in Rich or Poor, or any Person Psal. 16. 2,
that differed from her in Judgment, 3.
such Persons were always welcome
to her ; and she ever expressed an
high esteem of them. She *delighted* Psal. 119.
most in the Society of those who truly 63.
feared the Lord.

She would speak her Mind freely,
and with very great Zeal, in vin-
dicating God's Faithful Servants,
when she heard any of them spoken
against, or reflected on by others.

Her Humility was very conspicuous and apparent to all that conversed much with her. And you of her Neighbours who knew her well, can give your Attestation to what I say. How free was she always in her Converse with you? And how familiar would she be with the poorest of you? The Poor was as welcome to her as the Rich; and more especially such as feared the Lord. She would visit the poorest of her Neighbours with delight, when she could have any hopes of doing them good, or of administering any Relief to them.

She went very modestly in her Apparel, (ever since I knew her) chusing rather to go below her Quality, than in the least to exceed. She could not endure those ridiculous Fashions which are now so much followed by many; those foolish and fantastical Dresses which abundance do please themselves with. And for my part, I verily believe that a great many Persons amongst

amongſt us, do pleaſe but a very few with their Dreſs, beſides the Devil and themſelves. And I wiſh the Lord may not bring upon theſe, what he brought upon the haughty Daughters of *Zion*, *Iſa.* 3. 16,—26. *Jer.* 15. 9. *chap.* 14. 1, —18. and 52. 1,—27. Many there are which ſeem not to approve of theſe fooliſh, fantaſtical Faſhions, and yet, forſooth, they muſt follow the ſame, leſt they make themſelves ridiculous. But our honoured Friend, the deceased Gentlewoman, was not of their Mind; for ſhe rather choſe to be accounted ridiculous by proud and fooliſh Sinners, than to make her ſelf ſo indeed, in the Sight of the All-ſeeing God. She ſpent little time in dreſſing her ſelf, and as little ſhe ſpent in Idleneſs.

She would conſtantly be employed in one honeſt Buſineſs or other, as knowing it ſinful (either in Poor or in Rich) to trifle and idle away precious Time.

She had indeed her Infirmities and Weaknesses (which none are free from while here in the World,) but these (I believe) were her great Grief and Burden. Naturally she seem'd to be inclined to Passion, the which I have heard her lament and bewail; and I hope, through Grace, she did very much conquer it.

Some of her Servants have told me, that when she has been most angry, her Back was no sooner turned but all her Passion was gone, and she would then be as mild and well pleased again, as if she had never been angry.

She was a very Tender and Affectionate Wife, and as suitable (I believe) as ever Husband enjoyed. Sure never did two live more comfortably together than these two Persons did. Their greatest Strife seem'd always to be which should exceed in their Love to each other.

She was a very careful and indulgent Mother, and had a very tender love to her Children, yet would never indulge them in any thing that was bad.

Her nearest and dearest Relations and Friends, have cause to lament and bewail their own Loss; but to rejoyce and take comfort in the hopes of her Gain. 1 Theff. 4. 13. - 18.

Her Expressions and Carriage in her last Sickness, and the Morning before she was taken ill, were very remarkable and affecting: For immediately before her last Sickness seiz'd her, she renew'd her Resolutions of praising God more; and told her Affectionate (and now Sorrowful) Husband, that they would join together in singing God's Praises. And she also discoursed then with him of Death, and of the great Concerns of their Souls, and this with greater Affection and Freedom than usually she had done. And she further expressed her wil-

lingness to die, if she had but more hopes of her fitness for it. And all this the same Morning before her Sickness seized her, which was therefore the more remarkable. And after she was taken ill, and her Pains were very great upon her, she would justify God, and be speaking good of his Name; saying, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. Well, (would she say) God is still Good and Gracious, O! that I could love so Good a God more!*

Mic. 7. 9.

It is very affecting to hear a poor Soul (who is even ready to breath out her last) still breathing forth earnest Desires after God, and after a more ardent Love unto him. She desired to love him more while she was here: and O now she loves, even as she is beloved!

She renew'd her Resolutions of praising God more, and now she's gone to sing everlasting *Allelujahs*.

Let this therefore comfort her dearest Relations, and every one of us who truly loved her ; that though Phil. 1.21. her Death be a Loss unto us, yet Heb. 12.23. it's far more gainful to her. We have ground to hope that her Soul is gone to the Spirits of the Just made perfect ; where she shall sin no more, nor sorrow any more ; but all Tears shall be wiped from Rev. 21.4. her Eyes : and there shall be no more Death, neither Sickness, nor Pain ; for the former Things are passed away.

Now the Use that we should make of what hath been spoken in the Praise and Commendation of our deceased Friend, is to follow and imitate her Example, in whatsoever was excellent and imitable in her.

She was much in reading the Word of God, in Meditation and Secret Prayer, and in that necessary (and too much neglected) Duty of Self-Examination.

Let

Let us endeavour therefore to be much in the practice of these necessary and most profitable Duties, that we may live comfortably, and die happily, as we hope this deceased Gentlewoman did.

I am by no means for commending the Dead any further than may be for the good of the Living, and for the Praise and Glory of God. Yea, I look upon it as a very great Sin, to commend the deceased without good ground for it; for in so doing God's People are grieved, and the Wicked more hardened in their Impenitency. And yet this (alas !) is a practice too common.

But I hope I have said nothing of our deceased Friend but what may be attested by many, and that which may be of good use to us all, if we be not wanting to our selves. Whatsoever Failings therefore we might see in her, let us labour to shun and avoid the like; and whereinsoever she did excel,
let

let us labour to imitate her. And Phil. 4. 8, 9.
let us always endeavour to be Fol-
Heb. 6. 12.
lowers of those, who through Faith and
Patience inherit the Promises.

Now unto him that is able to keep you
from falling, and to present you
faultless before the Presence of his Glory
with exceeding Joy, To the only-Wise
God our Saviour, be Glory and Ma-
jesty, Dominion and Power, both now
and ever. Amen.

An

AN EPI TAPH.

POor Mortals ! how can you once cast an Eye
Upon this Stone, and Grave wherein I lie ?
And not consider, that your Bodies must
Within a while also be laid in Dust.

But that's not all, your Souls must then ascend
To God's Tribunal ; where your final End
Shall be determined ; and you doom'd to
A Place of everlasting Weal, or Wo.

And O ! how happy they that shall obtain
A Portion in those Mansions, which remain
To all Eternity ; where they shall sing
Triumphant Allelujahs to their King !

But Wo, wo, wo, ten thousand Woes to those
Who God forgot, and sinful Pleasures chose :
For they in everlasting Flames must lie,
And be tormented to Eternity.

Memento Mori. Learn this Lesson well :
Think on the Joys of Heav'n, and Pains of Hell :
Rouse from thy sinful Sloth, cast off thy Chains ;
Believe, Repent, and work while Time remains.

F I N I S.

